



Business Indicators ♦ April 2011

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Most respondents were born in Canada, and of the 10 percent whose country of origin was not Canada, 75 percent were citizens and 24 percent were landed immigrants.

What apprenticeship programs did survey respondents take?

The former students had apprenticed in a variety of trades.² The programs with the largest number of respondents were Electrician and Carpentry; nearly one third of respondents were in one of these two program areas. Steel Fabrication & Welding and Plumbing were not far behind, followed by Automotive Mechanics.

Apprenticeship program areas

Apprenticeship Program Area	% of Total Respondents
Electrician	16%
Carpentry	15%
Steel Fabrication & Welding	12%
Plumbing	12%
Automotive Mechanics	7%
Medium/Heavy Duty Mechanics	7%
Exterior and Interior Finishing Trades	4%
Industrial Mechanics & Maintenance	4%
Pipefitter & Sprinkler Fitter	4%
Culinary Arts	4%
Autobody/Collision & Repair	2%
Machinist	2%
Heating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration	2%
Construction Heavy Equipment	2%
Precision Metal Working	1%
Other	4%
Total	100%

How many received qualification or certification?

A large majority (83 percent) of the former apprentices surveyed said they received their Trades Qualification (TQ)—also called British Columbia Certificate of Qualification

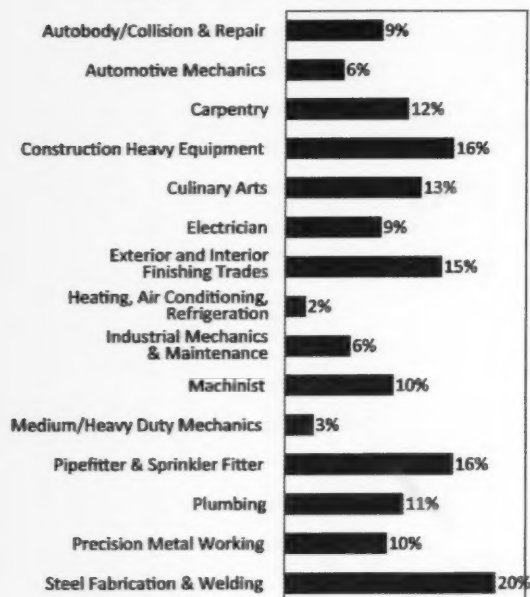
(C of Q)—many with Inter-provincial (IP) or Red Seal endorsement. To receive certification, apprentices must successfully complete a number of work-based training hours, complete or successfully challenge all required levels of technical training, and pass examinations.

What was the labour force participation of former students?

Labour force participation—those employed or looking for work—of former apprenticeship students has remained consistently high: 97 to 99 percent over the past five years. In 2010, almost all (97 percent) of the former students surveyed were in the labour force. In comparison, the labour force participation rate (unadjusted) for the B.C. population aged 20 to 54 was 83 percent in March of 2010, according to the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey.

While respondents to the annual surveys have had very high rates of labour force participation, employment has been on the downswing for the last two years. For several years, respondents had unemployment rates under 3 percent, so a jump to 8 percent in 2009 and a further increase to 11 percent in 2010 was startling. Those recent rates were a reflection of the declining employment in apprenticeable occupations that occurred across Canada, and that was particularly pronounced in B.C. Some occupations were harder hit than others, and as a result, the unemployment rates for the apprenticeship program areas varied considerably.

Some program areas had much lower unemployment rates than others



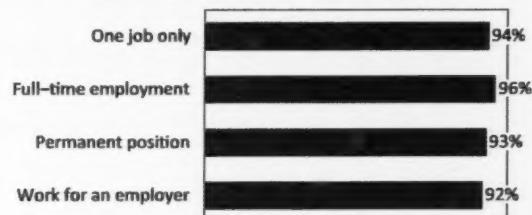
Note: The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

What were former students' employment outcomes?

At the time of the survey, 86 percent of survey respondents were employed at a job or business. In approximately the same time period, March 2010, the employment rate (unadjusted) for the B.C. population aged 20 to 54 was 76 percent, according to the Statistic Canada Labour Force Survey.

Most employed respondents had only one job and it was most likely a permanent, full-time position rather than a part-time or temporary one. Likewise, most respondents were employed by someone else rather than being self-employed (8 percent were self-employed).

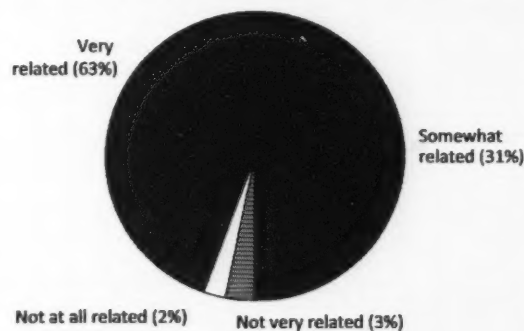
Most employed respondents had full-time, permanent positions with an employer



Note: Percentages above are based on employed respondents.

The respondents who had employment found it relatively quickly—the majority were employed in less than one month. Almost all working respondents had jobs related to their training. Most said the knowledge and skills they gained in their training were useful to them in the performance of their jobs.

Most employed respondents said their current job was related to their apprenticeship training



Note: Percentages above are based on employed respondents.

In spite of their higher than usual unemployment rate, the former apprentices surveyed in 2010 were very positive about their apprenticeship experiences. The findings of the APPSO survey confirm that B.C. apprenticeship training is appropriate, well-received, and meeting the goal of preparing a skilled workforce for the future.

What occupations did former apprenticeship students have?

A substantial majority—90 percent—of the employed respondents were working in Trades, Transport, and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations.³ In addition, a handful (n=16) were employed as managers in construction and transportation. The remainder of the respondents were spread thinly across all the other occupational categories, although 4 percent were in Sales and Service Occupations.

There is a very good correlation between former students' apprenticeship programs and their subsequent occupations. For example, 96 percent of the respondents who apprenticed in the program area of Automotive Mechanics were employed as motor vehicle mechanics or supervisors, 96 percent of those in the program area of Plumbing were employed as plumbers, pipefitters, and gas fitters or supervisors, and 95 percent of those who apprenticed as an electrician were employed in electrical trades or as supervisors.⁴

What was the wage of respondents employed at the time of the survey?

At the time of the survey, the median hourly wage of employed respondents was \$29—the same as it was for 2009 survey respondents. Until 2010, the median hourly wage among former apprenticeship students had been increasing steadily since the 2005 survey—wage figures in previous years were: \$24 (2005), \$25 (2006), \$27 (2007), \$28 (2008), and \$29 (2009).⁵

The hourly wage varies quite a bit across occupations. Among the 10 most common occupations for 2010 respondents, the me-

dian hourly wage ranges from a low of \$15 (Chefs & Cooks, Butchers & Bakers), to a high of \$33 (Machinery & Transportation Equipment Mechanics).

Hourly wage varies significantly by occupation

Occupation	Hourly Wage
Machinery & Transportation Equipment Mechanics	\$33
Printing Press Operators, Commercial Divers, & NEC	\$32
Electrical Trades & Telecommunication Occupations	\$31
Contractors & Supervisors, Trades & Related	\$30
Metal Forming, Shaping & Erecting Occupations	\$30
Plumbers, Pipefitters & Gas Fitters	\$29
Machinists and Related Occupations	\$26
Carpenters & Cabinetmakers	\$26
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	\$25
Chefs & Cooks	\$15

Note: The wages above are medians; the occupation groups are at the NOC 3-digit level.

¹ When the term *former students* is used, it is meant to represent the former apprenticeship students who responded to one of the Apprenticeship Student Outcomes surveys.

² The trades programs named in this article have been organized according to the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) coding and then grouped to simplify reporting.

³ The National Occupational Classification (NOC) system, which is a taxonomy of occupations in the Canadian labour market, was used to assign 4-digit codes to the occupations former students had at the time of the survey. The codes are used to describe occupations and to aggregate them into occupational categories. The grouping of occupations called "Trades, Transport, and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations" is at the 1-digit level.

⁴ This grouping of occupations is at the 3-digit NOC level.

⁵ These median wage amounts have not been adjusted for inflation.

For more information visit the BC Student Outcomes website

<http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Home.aspx>